

POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH INVENTORY



Richard G. Tedeschi and Lawrence G. Calhoun



Item Development

- Review of available literature
- Interviews

Posttraumatic Growth Inventory

- Indicate for each of the statements below the degree to which this change occurred in your life as a result of your crisis, using the following scale.
- 0= I did not experience this change as a result of my crisis.
- 1= I experienced this change to a very small degree as a result of my crisis.
- 2= I experienced this change to a small degree as a result of my crisis.
- 3= I experienced this change to a moderate degree as a result of my crisis.
- 4= I experienced this change to a great degree as a result of my crisis.
- 5= I experienced this change to a very great degree as a result of my crisis.



Five Empirically Derived Factors

New Possibilities
Relating to Others
Personal Strength
Appreciation of Life
Spiritual Change



New Possibilities - 5 items

I developed new interests.

I established a new path for my life.



Relating to Others - 7 items

I more clearly see that I can count on people in times of trouble.

I have more compassion for others



Personal Strength - 4 items

I have a greater feeling of self-reliance.

I discovered that I'm stronger than I thought I was.



Spiritual Change - 2 items

I have a better understanding of spiritual matters.

I have a stronger religious faith.



Appreciation of Life - 3 items

I changed my priorities about what is important in life.

I have a greater appreciation for the value of my own life.

I can better appreciate each day.

Are Self-reports on PTGI Valid?

Self-enhancing cognitive bias--may be a factor in **some** reports of PTG

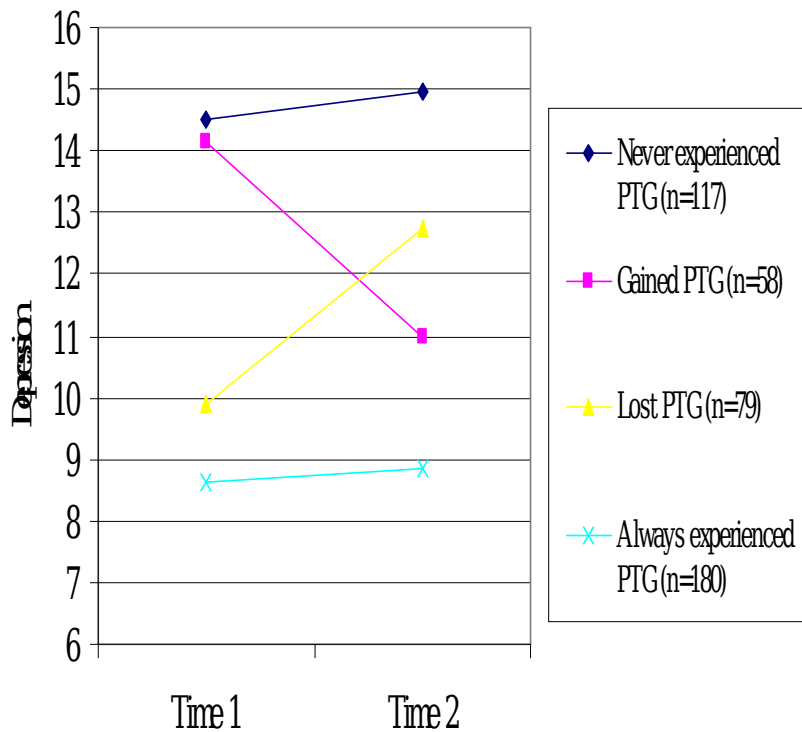
Are Self-reports on PTGI Valid?

- No relationship between PTG and Social Desirability
- Trauma survivors usually report both positive and negative outcomes.
- Growth may be under-reported on PTGI
- Reports tend to be corroborated

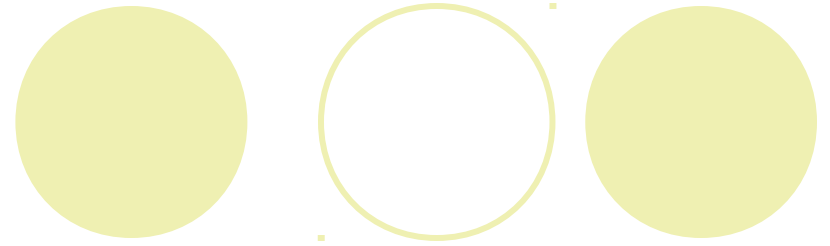
PTGI Scores and Indices of Adjustment

Inconsistent results

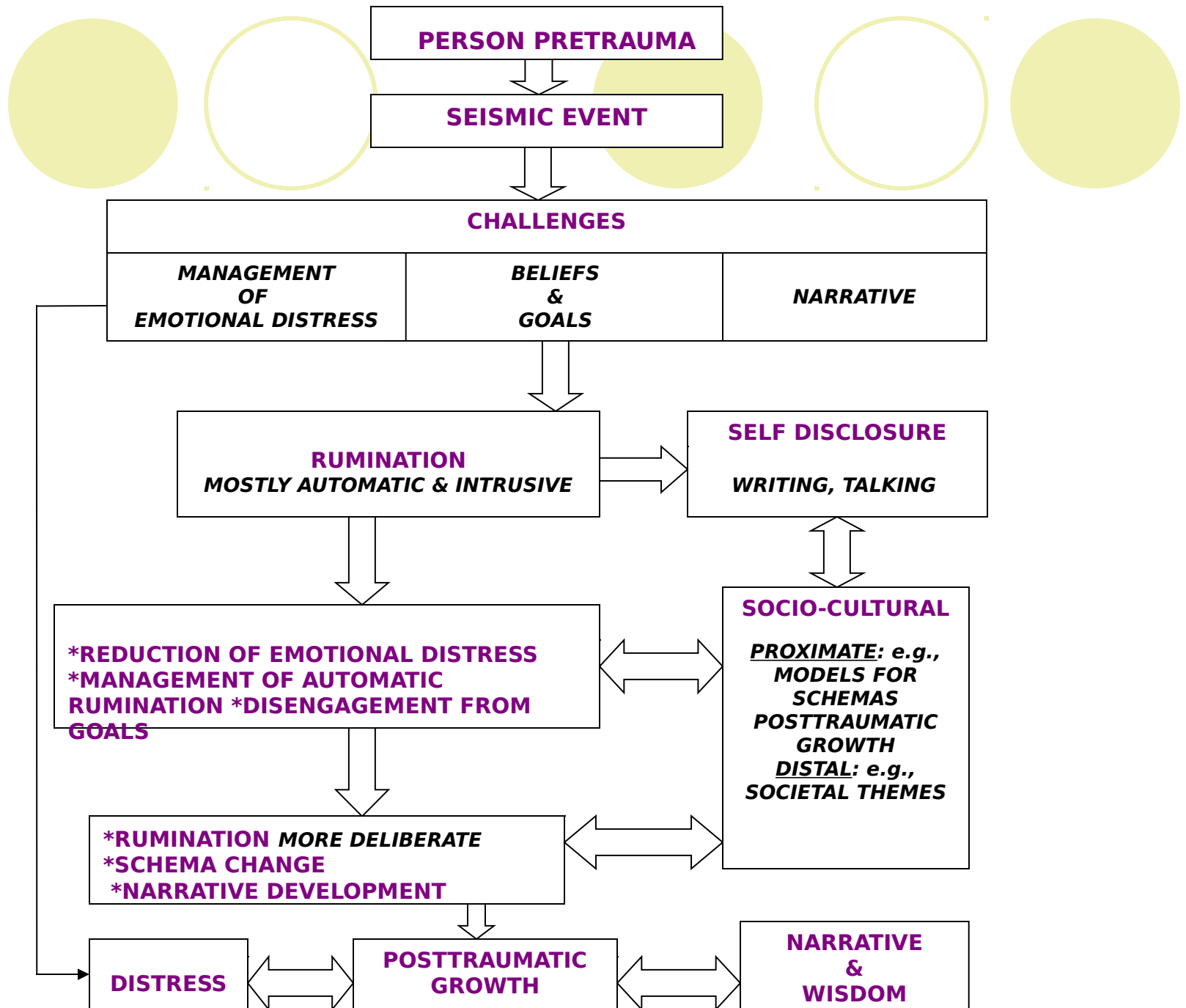
A complicated pattern, if there is only one.



- HIV patients studied over 1.6 years
- 59% reported PTG.
- 4 patterns of PTG and depression
- (Milam, 2002)



- Perhaps PTG is related to a wisdom that reaches beyond more superficial concepts of adjustment, such as well-being, or lack of distress.
- Optimal psychological functioning may involve a willingness to explore existential issues, fulfillment, and virtue.



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Empirical Findings: PTGI Range of Scores

- Lowest among victims of criminals in South Africa ($M=40$).
- Moderate among bereaved parents ($M=60$), WWII bombing survivors ($M=69$), breast cancer survivors ($M=58$).
- Highest among college students reporting varieties of severe trauma ($M=83$).



Empirical Findings: Individual differences

- Openness $r = .25$ with New Possibilities and Personal Strength.
- Extraversion Activity $r = .31$ and Positive Emotions $r = .34$ with PTGI.



Empirical Findings: Self-disclosure & Support/Constraint

- Breast cancer survivors (Cordova et al., 2001): Social constraint from friends and family associated with less cognitive processing and less PTG.
- Husbands of breast cancer survivors (Weiss, 2002): Social support related to acknowledgement of fear and to PTG.
- Breast cancer survivors (Antoni, et al., 2001): Emotional processing related to PTG but not optimism.

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Empirical Findings: Cognitive Processing

- Frequency of rumination $r = .49$ with PTGI among older adults (Tedeschi, Calhoun & Cooper, 2000).
- College students instructed to process emotional aspects of trauma in their journals showed higher PTGI scores (Lutgendorf, 2002).

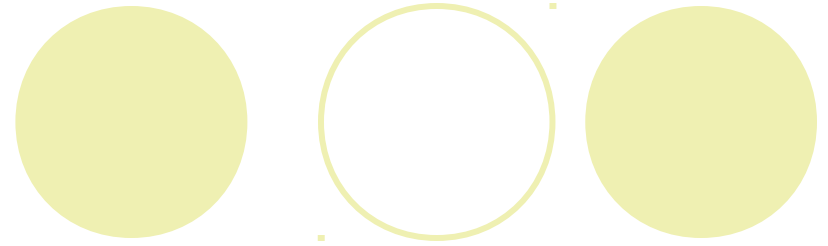
Recent Development: PTG in Children

- Children 6-15 reported PTG in the aftermath of hurricane flooding:
 - Rumination & Competency Beliefs $r = .38$.
 - Social Support & Competency Beliefs $r = .35$
 - Competency Beliefs & PTG $r = .55$.
- (Cryder, Kilmer, Tedeschi, & Calhoun, 2006)



Is PTG an “American Concept?”

There are reports of PTG across cultures--Israel, China, Turkey, Germany, Bosnia, Japan, Holland, Australia, Switzerland.

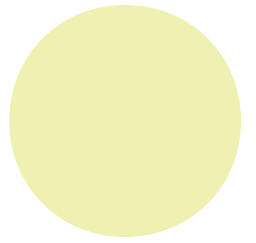
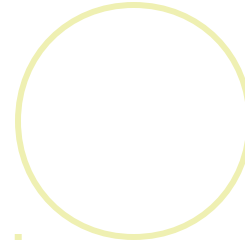
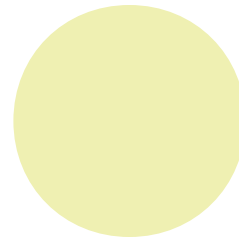
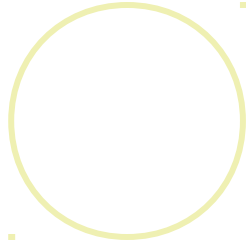
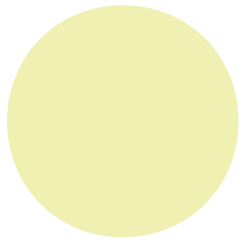


- **Collectivistic Characteristics May Affect PTGI Scores**

In North America, traditionally, the tendency is the individual resolution of the problem, conquering the wilderness, whereas in Japanese culture, a collective oriented culture, growth may come out of the group stability.

- **Historical, religious background may affect PTG.**

Buddhism and Shinto have penetrated Japanese customs and have had a great influence on its culture. The dogma mainly emphasizes accepting everything, including trauma as it is, and the virtue stresses shouldering one's past.



Measuring Related Variables



Social Context

- 1. None of my friends or family has ever suggested to me that facing a crisis can make you a better person.
- 2. If someone talked about how something good can come out of a really bad experience, most people I know would agree.
- 3. I have known people who experienced really tough situations and saw benefits in their difficult experience.



General Social Support

- 1. They comforted me.
- 2. They expressed interest and concern for my well-being.
- 3. They supported me.



Social Constraint

- I decided not to talk to people about my experience because I felt that they would be uncomfortable talking to me about it.
- I felt that they would prefer I keep my thoughts about my experience to myself
- I felt that they were eager to let me talk about my experience.

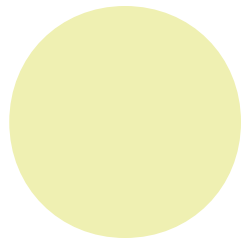
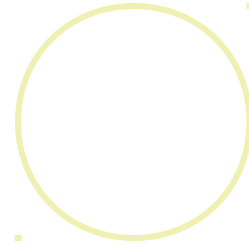
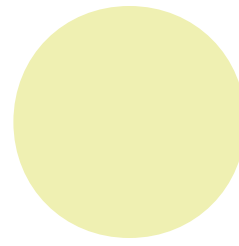
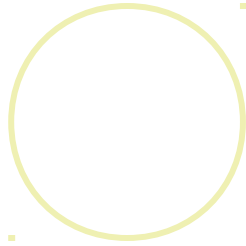
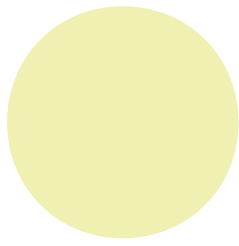


Desire to Self-Disclose

- I wanted to seek them out to help me deal with my experience.
- I wanted to avoid talking about my experience with them.
- I wanted to tell them how I was feeling about my experience.

Cognitive Processing/Rumination

- Soon after my experience, I thought about the event when I didn't mean to.
- Soon after the event, thoughts about the experience came into my mind and I could not stop thinking about the event.
- Soon after the event, I decided to think about the experience to try and make sense out of what happened.

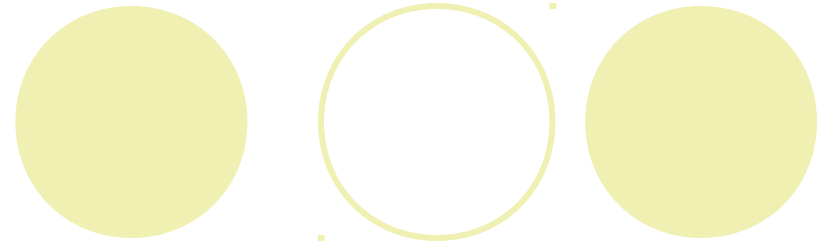


- Soon after the event, I tried to make something good come out of my experience.
- Soon after the event, I reminded myself of some of the benefits that came from adjusting to the experience.
- As a result of what happened, soon after the event I found myself automatically thinking about the purpose of my life.
- As a result of what happened, soon after the event I deliberately would think about and ask questions about whether or not life has a meaning or purpose.



Core Beliefs Challenge

- **My experience has led me to seriously examine...**
 - the degree to which things that happen to people are fair.
 - the degree to which things that happen to people are controllable.
 - my assumptions concerning why other people think and behave the way that they do.
 - my relationships with other people.



- my sense of my abilities, strengths and weakness.
- my expectations for my future.
- the meaning of my life.
- my spiritual or religious beliefs.
- my own value or worth as a person.

Assumptions and Predictions

- It's not the trauma, **it's the struggle.**
- People first struggle to survive, not grow.
- Psychological fitness and PTG: It's curvilinear?
- Illusions: Yes and No.
- PTG and distress coexist.
- There are various routes to growth.

Subtleties of Cognitive Processing



- Intrusive thinking
- Non-intrusive repetitive thinking
- Deliberate meaning-making
- Positive reinterpretation
- Benefit reminding
- Timing: immediately after the trauma or later?

PTG domains, types of processing, and timing

- Bereaved parents (Calhoun, Tedeschi, Fulmer, & Harlan, 2000): sensitivity to types of processing at points in time.
- Intrusive thinking not related to PTG.
- Repetitive thinking immediately $r=.48$ with Personal Strength.
- Deliberate meaning-making immediately $r=.48$ with PTGI (all domains except Personal Strength).
- Positive reinterpretation and benefit-reminding recently $r=.36/.44$ with PTGI, through New Possibilities ($r=.55/.55$) and Appreciation of Life ($r=.46/.36$) only.



PTG and Trauma Events

- Participants reported experiencing an average of 2.62 traumatic events with 66% reporting experiencing multiple traumas.
- Greater PTG was related to a greater number of traumatic events reported in the last five years, more recent traumatic events, and higher levels of distress at time of traumatic event (Wild & Paivio, 2003).



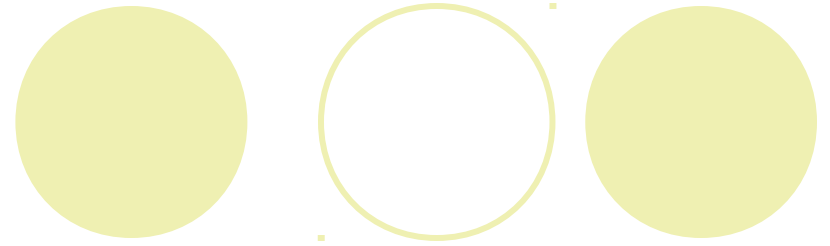
Trauma “Pile-ups”

- Compared >1 event within a month with single and multiple traumas.
- More stressful events the higher the PTG score.
- Participants reporting two or more events had significantly higher scores on the Core Beliefs Scale, Impact of the Event, and General Health Questionnaire than participants reporting a single event.
- No significant effects were found on the pile-up of losses and the PTGI, IES-R, CBS or RI. The pile-up group reported higher scores on the GHQ than single event group.



Cross-cultural study

- 312 (124 males, 188 females), Japanese university students who reported their most traumatic/ stressful life event in life.
- The results showed the PTGI-J has high internal consistency and, of the original five PTGI factors Relating to Others, New Possibilities, Personal Strength, and a fourth factor combining Spiritual Change and Appreciation of Life.



- Contrary to previous studies in Western countries, the averages of some items were relatively low, especially for the item "I have a stronger religious faith."
- In this study, the events reported by participants included what appear to be Japanese specific crises that are related to a sense of guilt, such as "betrayed someone's trust", "hurt someone unintentionally" and failure on highly important university admission exams.